

AMHERST COUNCIL ON AGING MINUTES

APRIL 14, 2005

Members Present: Jean Haggerty, *Chair*; Doris Holden, *Treasurer*; Elsie Fetterman, Barbara Sutherland, Frank Lattuca, Henry Peirce

Absent: Susan Whitbourne, Al Byam

Staff Present: Nancy Pagano (Interim Director/Program Director), Maura Plante (Program Director/Services), Karen Erman (Management Assistant), Marlene Barnett (Program Coordinator)

Others: Marge Babb, Arnold Friedman (At-Large Liaison to the Comprehensive Planning Committee)

Welcome

Meeting called to order at 9:08 AM. Jean welcomed all members and guests

Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of March 10, 2005, were reviewed and accepted as written.

SENIOR TRUST

Treasurer's Report:

Doris Holden reported that the Trust received the \$10,000 from the anonymous donors for nursing services at the Nursing Center. The balance on hand for the Nursing Service is now \$12,878.06. The balance in the checking account as of April 14th is \$9,153.11. The investments have dropped and the total assets are \$95,337.41. Since this report there was one check written for a scholarship and one emergency payment for medication for \$19.66. The Treasurer's report was accepted as written.

Update on Resolution of Fundraising Issue:

Nancy reported that the issues related to the Senior Trust and fundraising are still being looked at by Alan Seewald, Town Council, the Town Manager and John Musante, Director of Finances. As this issue has been evolving, Nancy has some serious questions about the 501(c)3 as it relates to the two choices which are (1) having the Senior Trust Account maintained by the Town Treasurer, or (2) changing the Trust By-laws so that the people who control the money are not COA members. Nancy's questions:

- If the Senior Trust Account is maintained by the Town Treasurer, will the 501(c)3 still be valid or will the status have to be given up? This will impact our qualifying for some grants.
- What will happen to the Senior Center Club and the Senior Travel Club accounts which use the Senior Trust tax ID number?
- Since the "The Senior Spirit" newsletter is mailed under the Senior Trust will we still be able to qualify for the same discounted rates?

Nancy has also talked to Linda Chalfant, Director of Leisure Services, regarding the LSSE "Friends" account and Linda indicated that people are more likely to give a donation to a Friends Account rather than to the Town. These issues and many others will have to be thought through before a decision can be made.

Jean Haggerty moved to table the discussion until there is more information on how to proceed. The issue was tabled.

OLD BUSINESS

WMACA Quarterly Meeting Report:

Marlene Barnett, Barbara Sutherland, and Susan Wait attended the MCOA quarterly meeting which was held on Monday, March 14, 2005, in West Springfield. The meeting was called, "Boomers, Boomers, Everywhere: But can you get them involved in the Senior Center?" Marlene reported that the meeting discussion centered around the City of Chicopee's boomer survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine the boomer's concerns, service, program and activity needs. Recommendations that came out of this meeting were how to attract new COA members and ways to encourage younger people (read boomers) to come to your Senior Center.

STAFF REPORTS

NANCY

Budget Process:

Nancy said that Barry was disappointed by the House vote regarding additional State Aid for cities and towns. The Town Manager had been hopeful that cities and towns would receive additional monies to help with their already stretched budgets. Final figures won't be expected to be announced until June. Barry is still working at restoring the fifth day for Maura and that issue is on the top of his "needs" list. The Town Manager told department heads that he is very concerned that if the State Aid does not change, he will have to make serious budget cuts. Jean asked if the COA members should plan on being at Town Meeting. Nancy stated that as Town Meeting gets closer, the COA might have to call an emergency meeting to discuss strategy for Town Meeting.

Newsletter Finances:

Nancy explained to the Council that the mailing of the newsletter is going to cost more because the Post Office automation cannot handle the thickness of the Senior Spirit newsletter. Hand sorting costs more. Also postage in general is going up soon and this will add to the cost further. More money is trying to be raised through advertisements and donations. Jean suggested that perhaps the newsletters can be hand delivered to Ann Whalen Apartments. This is a possibility that will be looked into. Elsie reminded Nancy that the stats for the newsletter should be on the monthly statistics report.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING COMMITTEE

Arnold Friedman, Member-At-Large of the Comprehensive Planning Committee, thanked the Council members for inviting him to be the COA's liaison. The Comprehensive Planning Committee's role is to arrive at a Master Plan for Amherst. Town Meeting has approved \$20,000 to begin the structuring of the Master Plan and an RFP was sent out. They had seven responses and have hired a consultant. Mr. Friedman said that he will make sure to share information from the Comprehensive Planning Committee with the COA, and he will also bring concerns of the COA to the Comprehensive Planning Committee.

TRANSPORTATION

- **PVTA Plans Service Cutbacks for FY06**

Jean attended an April 5th hearing of the Pioneer Valley Transit Authority (PVTA). There were two public hearings scheduled, one in Northampton and one in Springfield for people to express their concerns about proposed bus service cuts. At the Northampton hearing that Jean attended, PVTA indicated that on the tentative chopping block is all Sunday service. This will be a hardship for many people who work on weekends and people who want to attend Sunday church services. Jean suggested that the COA members need to lobby the Select Board to support our transportation services. This is important for many Amherst residents who need weekend transportation.

Elsie suggested that perhaps the private sector, such as Big Y, would subsidize a bus for people to shop at their stores. Jean said that this has not been looked into as far as she knows. Transportation is an issue that has to be brought to the attention of the Comprehensive Planning Committee for the Master Plan. Frank suggested that in order for someone in the private sector to offer a bus service to their store, there needs to be numbers on how many people would use the service.

- **Co-Sponsored Van Use:**

Jean stated that residents of Ann Whalen would like to use the Senior Center van for trips. She has spoken to Nancy on the matter and Nancy feels that this is a good idea. A policy needs to be set up for groups not sponsored by the Senior Center to use the van.

Al Byam told the COA members that UMass has a community outreach program where a 29 passenger bus and driver is available for use for free for UMass functions that could be utilized. This is something to consider as there are many cultural events at the Fine Arts Center. The Transportation Committee will follow up on this opportunity.

HVES:

Elsie reported on the monthly HVES meeting that she and Barbara Sutherland attended on April 4th. The feature presentation this month was the new Mandated Reporters Legislation as it affects Councils on Aging. One of the newest reportable conditions is self-neglect. We are all mandated to report any kind of abuse

(physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, financial or self-neglect) that we see. Maura will be attending a meeting put on by HVES about Protective services on April 28th.

BY-LAWS:

Jean and Doris met several times to work on the revision on the Amherst Council on Aging By-Laws. They took a look at the Marblehead COA By-Laws and the Amherst By-Laws and drafted a revision that was passed out to all the members. They asked all the members to review the draft and to make suggestions and additions for the next meeting. Jean suggested that after review of the By-Laws that they take effect by the beginning of the fiscal year on July 1st. If anyone wants a copy of the Marblehead COA By-Laws they can get one from Nancy.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Doris spoke to the COA members, whose terms expire in June, i.e. Hank, Elsie & Jean, and all have agreed to accept another term. Jean has agreed to be a co-chair of the COA if Al Byam is willing to be co-chair with her. Barbara Sutherland is willing to be an alternate co-chair or vice chair if needed. Also, Rosemary Kofler has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Joan Keochakian (2007).

NEW BUSINESS

NURSING CENTER:

- The anonymous donors have contributed \$10,000 for another year. Nancy recommends that the \$10,000, plus any Nursing Service targeted money remaining in the Trust account, be turned over to the Town to manage. Presently the Town runs a deficit account for the Nursing Center and bills the Trust quarterly to recover its money. The COA voted unanimously to turn the money over to the Town Account to manage.
- Nancy wants to hold a meeting of the Wellness Committee to discuss writing a letter to the Health Department to ask for a reconvening of the "transition team" to discuss with the Health Department the progress of the Nursing Center now that it has been under its supervision since September 2004. Elsie did not feel comfortable with this idea. As an alternative, Frank suggested that Chair of the COA write the request to the Health Department with a cc to the Town Manager. The COA decided that Jean should request the update from the Health Director.

DEFIBRILATOR PROJECT:

In a cooperative effort by the Fire Department, Health Department, LSSE, and the Senior Center, a project is underway to fund the placement of an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) in the Bangs Community Center and Amherst Town Hall. AED's are used to treat individuals who suffer sudden cardiac arrest. Defibrillators placed in both these buildings could save lives in our community. The cost of the two defibrillators is \$6,000 and donations to fund this project will be asked of the community. The SALT Council has already donated \$500 towards the project and Nancy asked the Council members if the Trust would like to make a donation to the project. Elsie voiced concern that she wants to support the project, but wants to make sure the Senior Center has a social worker 5 days a week. The COA members voiced their commitment to the project but decided to table the decision on how much to donate at this time. It is hoped that the community comes through with all the money needed to fund the project. There is also some concern about the Senior Center budget and the degree to which the Senior Trust will need to fund unmet needs.

ELDER CARE CONFERENCE AT MONT MARIE:

The Annual Elder Care Conference for Western Massachusetts is being held on Wednesday, May 11th at the Mont Marie Conference Center in Holyoke. The theme is "The Aging Adventure: Image and Reality". The program is for elder care providers, administrators, educators and policy-makers. Maura, Barbara, Jean and Doris have decided to go to the conference.

OTHER BUSINESS

Frank commented that a Friends group needs to be established soon as fund raising needs to continue to support the Senior Center and its activities in light of the dim State Budget.

Next Meeting is Thursday, May 12th at 9:00 AM. (Please note agenda of April 14th had wrong date).

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Erman, Management Assistant